

# The Incredible Years Training Series

Brief Description | Recognition | Program IOM | Intervention Type | Content Focus | Protective Factors  
Risk Factors | Interventions by Domain | Key Program Approaches | Outcomes | Evaluation Design  
Delivery Specifications | Intended Setting | Fidelity | Barriers and Problems | Personnel | Education  
Personnel Training | Cost | Intended Age Group | Intended Population | Gender Focus  
Replication Information | Contact Information

*Program developers or their agents provided the Model Program information below.*

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Incredible Years Training Series provides three comprehensive, multifaceted, and developmentally based curricula for parents, teachers, and children. The program is designed to promote emotional and social competence and to prevent, reduce, and treat aggressive, defiant, oppositional, and impulsive behaviors in young children 2 to 8 years old.

## Program Background

The Incredible Years series was developed to promote positive, effective, and research-proven parenting and teaching practices that strengthen young children's social competence and problem-solving abilities, and reduce aggression at home and school. In the 1980s, the BASIC parenting program was evaluated and found to be successful in promoting lasting improvements in parent-child interactions and reducing children's behavior problems at home for at least two-thirds of the children. However, a followup evaluation 3 years later indicated that approximately one-third of the children were still having considerable difficulties at school and with their peer group. As a result of these findings, two new components—one focusing on parental communication, anger management, and problem-solving skills (ADVANCE) and another that developed child social skills and promoted problem-solving strategies and emotional language (Dinosaur School)—were added. Evaluation indicated these program components enhanced peer relationships, social problem-solving, and marital collaboration. For the past 6 years, a teacher-training curriculum, designed to teach positive classroom management skills, also has been under evaluation and found to significantly enhance the effectiveness of parent training.



## **RECOGNITION**

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Model Program

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice: Model Program

U.S. Leila Rowland National Mental Health Award

---

## **INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE CLASSIFICATION (IOM)**

SELECTIVE, INDICATED

This program is developed for selective and indicated audiences. It targets high-risk children and addresses multiple risk factors related to the development of conduct disorders in children in both school and home. It has also been tested with children 2 to 6 years of age who are at high risk by virtue of living in poverty.

---

## **INTERVENTION TYPE**

SCHOOL-BASED

---

## **CONTENT FOCUS**

ANTISOCIAL/AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR, DOES NOT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS SUBSTANCES, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE, VIOLENCE

This program is for very young children and addresses risk factors related to later substance abuse.

### **PARENT COMPONENT**

The Parent Training Series helps parents strengthen parenting skills and become more involved in their children's school activities.

### **VIOLENCE**

A teacher classroom management curriculum strengthens classroom management skills, reduces classroom aggression, and improves teachers' ability to focus on students' social, emotional, and academic competence.

## **PROTECTIVE FACTORS**

INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, PEER, SCHOOL, COMMUNITY

### **INDIVIDUAL**

- Child social competence
- Positive interactions with peers
- Social skills

### **FAMILY**

- Nurturing family atmosphere
- Strong parent-child bonds
- Family support
- Parenting skills

### **PEER**

- Positive peer play

### **SCHOOL**

- Cooperation with teachers and peers
- Problem-solving abilities
- Academic success
- Teacher classroom management

### **COMMUNITY**

- Community support
  - Positive networks with other families
  - Increased community involvement with school
- 

## **RISK FACTORS**

INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, PEER, SCHOOL

### **INDIVIDUAL**

- Problems with aggressive behavior
- Harsh, critical parenting behaviors
- Corporal punishment

### **FAMILY**

- Rejecting, unsupportive family atmosphere
- Poor parent-child bonds

## PEER

- Peer rejection
- Aggression toward peers

## SCHOOL

- Negative classroom atmosphere
- Poor classroom management
- Child aggression at school
- Overly critical teacher behaviors

---

## INTERVENTIONS BY DOMAIN

### INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, PEER, SCHOOL

#### INDIVIDUAL

- Life/social skills training

#### FAMILY

- Parent education/parenting skills training

#### PEER

- Classroom and peer support groups reinforcing unsupportive attitudes toward sexual permissiveness

#### SCHOOL

- Classroom-based skills development

---

## KEY PROGRAM APPROACHES

### PARENT TRAINING, SKILL DEVELOPMENT, PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION, THERAPY, OTHER: TEACHER TRAINING

#### PARENT TRAINING

The BASIC program teaches parenting skills known to promote children's social competence and reduce behavior problems. It addresses four components: how to play with children; praise and rewards; effective limit setting; and strategies to handle misbehavior. The ADVANCE program emphasizes parent interpersonal skills such as communication, anger management, problem solving, and ways to give and get support. SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION emphasizes parenting approaches designed to promote children's academic skills such as reading, setting up predictable homework routines, and building collaborative relationships with teachers. A series of video vignettes are the core teaching tool.

#### SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Each of the three training programs trains children in skills such as emotional literacy, empathy or perspective taking, friendship, anger management, interpersonal problem solving, school rules, and how to be successful at school.

## PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION

The Parent Training Program focuses on a series of parent-child interactions on how to respond to children in clear, predictable ways, including around play; limit setting and monitoring strategies; praise and rewards; and handling misbehavior, including nonviolent discipline techniques.

## THERAPY

The Training Program for Children can also be used as a “pull out” treatment program for small groups of children exhibiting conduct problems. For children with Oppositional Defiant Disorder/Conduct Disorder, teachers, parents, and group facilitators will jointly develop transition plans that detail classroom strategies that are successful with each individual child; goals achieved and remaining; characteristics, interests, and motivators for the child; and preferred methods of contacting parents.

## OTHER: TEACHER TRAINING

This series teaches classroom management skills such as the effective use of teacher attention, praise, and encouragement; use of incentives for difficult behavior problems; proactive teaching strategies; how to manage inappropriate classroom behaviors; the importance of building positive relationships with students; and how to teach empathy, social skills, and problem solving in the classroom.

## HOW IT WORKS:

The program uses interventions delivered through three curricula: BASIC (basic parenting skills), ADVANCE (parental communication and anger management), and SCHOOL (parents promoting children’s academic skills), which are presented in four distinct formats:

**Dina Dinosaur Small Group Therapy**—18 to 22 weekly 2-hour sessions for children

**Dina Dinosaur Classroom**—includes 60 lesson plans that can be delivered 1 to 3 times a week in 45-minute class periods (preschool and early school-age lesson plans available)

**Parenting Groups**—12 to 14 weekly 2-hour sessions for the BASIC series and 10 to 12 weekly 2-hour sessions for the ADVANCE and SCHOOL series

**Teacher Classroom Management Series**—fourteen 2-hour sessions or 4-day intensive

Some of the strategic interventions used in these programs include:

- Group parenting skills training
- Group teacher classroom management training
- Group support for parents, teachers, and children
- Self-management skills training
- Peer support
- Decisionmaking skills training
- Training of group leaders/facilitators
- Interpersonal skills for training parents, teachers, and children

To successfully implement Incredible Years, the organization or school must be committed to excellence, evident in good administrative support and support for facilitator certification by certified trainers, as well as ongoing technical support and consultant workshops.

Each of the three curricula consists of videotapes, comprehensive facilitator manuals, books, take-home assignments, and refrigerator notes. It is recommended that all group participants (parents, teachers, children) have their own individual books and that facilitators have their own manuals. Videotape equipment is necessary.

Each group should have two group leaders. Group leaders complete a certification process that involves attendance at a certified training workshop, peer review, videotape feedback, and consultation.

### **Training and Materials**

Certified trainers are available to train therapists, counselors, teachers, and others to run parent, teacher, and child groups. Training sessions can accommodate 25 people, and run 3 days for group leaders of the Parenting Program, 2 days for leaders of the Dinosaur Child Program, and 4 days for the Teacher Classroom Management Program.

---

## **OUTCOMES**

### **IMPROVEMENTS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO PROTECTIVE FACTORS, REDUCTIONS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO RISK FACTORS, OTHER TYPES OF OUTCOMES**

#### **IMPROVEMENTS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO PROTECTIVE FACTORS**

The addition of the teacher and/or child training programs significantly enhanced the effects of parent training, resulting in significant improvements in peer interactions and behavior in school.

**Two randomized control group evaluations indicated that the child training series significantly increased:**

Children's appropriate cognitive problem-solving strategies.

Children's use of prosocial conflict management strategies with peers.

Children's social competence and appropriate play skills.

#### **REDUCTIONS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO RISK FACTORS**

Reduced conduct problems at home and school.

#### **OTHER TYPES OF OUTCOMES: INCREASES IN DEMOGRAPHICS RELATED TO RISK FACTORS**

According to the standardized reports by teachers and parents, at least 66% of children previously diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder/Conduct Disorder whose parents received the parenting program were in the normal range at both the 1- and 3-year followup assessments.

## **Benefits**

The child program promotes children's social competence and reduces conduct problems.

The parent program helps parents strengthen parenting skills and become more involved in their children's school activities.

The teacher program strengthens classroom management skills, reduces classroom aggression, and improves teachers' ability to focus on students' social, emotional, and academic competence.

---

## **EVALUATION DESIGN**

All three program components have been extensively evaluated in randomized control group studies with children diagnosed with ODD/CD. Program evaluations have included home and school observations by unbiased evaluators and teacher and parent reports on standardized measures. These findings have been replicated in four randomized studies by independent investigators with different ethnic populations and age groups in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

In the past decade, these programs have been adapted for use as prevention programs and have been evaluated with Head Start families with preschoolers and with toddlers and teachers in day care facilities. Two randomized control group studies have proven the effectiveness of the parent and teacher interventions in Head Start programs. Currently, the classroom-based Dinosaur Curriculum is being evaluated in kindergarten and first grade.

---

## **DELIVERY SPECIFICATIONS**

5–24 WEEKS, 25–52 WEEKS

**Amount of time required to deliver the program to obtain documented outcomes:**

The BASIC Parent Training Program is 12 to 14 weeks, involving facilitator-led group discussions of 250 video vignettes.

The ADVANCE Parent Training Program is an 8- to 10-week supplement to the BASIC program.

The Child Training Program—Dina Dinosaur's Social Skills and Problem Solving Curriculum—involves 18 to 20 small group treatment sessions offered twice a week for an hour or once a week for 2 hours. Preschool and early elementary age lesson plans are available for classroom prevention version (64 lesson plans).

---

## **INTENDED SETTING**

RURAL, URBAN, SUBURBAN

## **FIDELITY**

Components that must be included in order to achieve the same outcomes cited by the developer:

There must be strong administrative support from the school or organization for facilitator certification by certified trainers, as well as ongoing technical support and consultant workshop. Facilitators should also have peer review, videotape feedback, and consultation.

All individual participants (parents, teachers, and children) should have their own individual books, and facilitators should have their own manuals.

Videotaping equipment is necessary.

Each group should have two group leaders.

Optional components or strategies, and how they were determined to be optional:

Parent Basic program is core. Child or teacher training may be added for children with peer difficulties.

---

## **PERSONNEL**

FULL TIME, PART TIME, PAID

Facilitators should have facilitator certification by certified trainers, as well as ongoing technical support and consultant workshop. Facilitators should also have peer review, videotape feedback, and consultation.

---

## **EDUCATION**

UNDERGRADUATE, GRADUATE, SPECIAL CERTIFICATION

The Teacher Training Program is a 6-day intensive workshop (42 hours) for teachers, school counselors, and psychologists, or a series of 2-hour sessions totaling 42 hours.

---

## **PERSONNEL TRAINING**

Type: SEMINAR/WORKSHOP, Location: ONSITE (user),

Length: BASIC, REFRESHER REQUIRED

Certified trainers are available to train groups of 25 therapists, counselors, teachers, and others to run parent, teacher, and child groups and training takes 3 days; training for leaders of the Dinosaur Child Program takes 2 days; the Teacher Training Program takes 4 days; and the combined school-based Dinosaur curriculum takes 3 days.



## **COST (estimated in U.S. dollars)**

\$5,001–10,000

Cost considerations for implementing this program as recommended by the developer:

### **TRAINING COSTS**

Parent training (3 days) and child/teacher training (2 days) . . . . .	\$1,300 per day plus expenses
Technical Assistance . . . . .	Based on daily fee

### **MATERIALS COSTS**

Parent Training Program BASIC . . . . .	\$1,300
Parent Training Program, ADVANCE . . . . .	\$775
Parent Training Program, SCHOOL . . . . .	\$995
Teacher Training Program . . . . .	\$1,250
Child Training Program . . . . .	\$975

(Discounts are available for multiple orders.)

---

## **INTENDED AGE GROUP**

EARLY CHILDHOOD (0–4), CHILDHOOD (5–11)

This program was developed for children 2 to 8 years old.

---

## **INTENDED POPULATION**

AFRICAN AMERICAN, ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER, HISPANIC/LATINO, WHITE

Evaluation results show that this program is successful with children from various ethnic and racial groups, including Hispanics/Latinos, African Americans, and Asian Americans, and from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

---

## **GENDER FOCUS**

BOTH GENDERS

This program was developed for both male and female children.

---

## **REPLICATION INFORMATION**

NO INFORMATION PROVIDED

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **ABOUT THE DEVELOPER**

**Carolyn Webster-Stratton, Ph.D.**

Dr. Webster-Stratton, professor and director of the Parenting Clinic at the University of Washington, developed and produced The Incredible Years. Her mission is to develop cost-effective interventions that can be widely disseminated to prevent and treat conduct problems in young children. Dr. Webster-Stratton's programs have been extensively researched over the past 20 years in a series of studies funded by the National Institute for Nursing Research, Head Start Partnerships Grants, and various agencies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, including the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

### **FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT**

Lisa St. George  
1411 8th Avenue West  
Seattle, WA 98119  
Toll-free phone: (888) 506-3562  
Phone and fax: (206) 285-7565  
E-mail: [incredibleyears@seanet.com](mailto:incredibleyears@seanet.com)  
Web site: [www.incredibleyears.com](http://www.incredibleyears.com)